

# MULTI-FAMILY MEDIUM DENSITY DESIGN GUIDELINES



*PUBLIC DRAFT*

Prepared for the City of Fremont

by

Van Meter Williams Pollack, LLP

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## ***Design Guidelines as a Tool***

### **I.1 Purpose Statement**

Create quality residential development that appropriately connects to its surroundings, meets the demands of future generations for design variety and interest, includes well designed amenities and open spaces, orients outward to the community, promotes sustainability, and contributes to walkable and safe environments.

### **I.2 Application**

Multi-family development in Fremont occurs within a broad continuum of small to large sites and from low to high density building types. New multi-family development frequently occurs within the R-3 zoning district or within a Planned District based upon R-3 zoning standards. This document contains design objectives and principles that augment the basic requirements of R-3 zoning district standards. Although principally written to address interests related to R-3 zoning building types within the density range of 10 – 30 units per acre, the guidelines are applicable to all forms of multi-family development regardless of zoning district.

R-3 zoning district standards and concepts are not just the typical minimum expectations for development, but a framework to meet and balance the needs of the community and the developer. R-3 zoning fundamental intent is excellence in design and flexibility on how to provide a variety of high quality homes. The topical sections provide detailed guidance on expectations and best practices with explanations of and examples on how to meet City interests. Although the Design Guidelines include some typical means for successful design, they are not intended to preclude alternative strategies that meet the overall intent and purpose related to a particular concept or feature.

Following the Design Guidelines will allow the design review process to focus on not just meeting the minimum standards of zoning, but on creating high quality places and spaces. Using the Design Guidelines will also create efficiencies in coordinated and multi-disciplinary review by an applicant and the City. This approach will foster high quality developments that meet a variety of interests and should result in timely approval of proposed projects.



## I.3 Key Interests

- o Multi-family development is ever evolving to meet housing needs of the public and the City. Fremont's multi-family housing is largely infill in nature and requires thoughtful integration with surrounding development. The following are **Key Interests** in newly designed developments:
  - o Context Sensitive Design
  - o Site Planning and Layout
  - o Open Space and Landscape
  - o Building and Architectural Design
  - o Adaptability to Individual Sites
  - o Sustainability and Green Building



*The key issues for these guidelines revolve around creating infill development that must consider both existing and planned interests when creating new development.*

## I.4 Fundamental Goals

The Key Interests provide the basis for Fundamental Goals that are used to evaluate development proposals:

- o Goal 1- Organize site design around proposed common open space(s), circulation systems and adjoining sites. Create appropriate transitions to surrounding developments through building design and placement as well as connected vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems.
- o Goal 2- Minimize impacts to development aesthetics and common area functionality through thoughtful integration of utility meters, fire standpipes, backflow preventers, stormwater treatment and solid waste disposal facilities.
- o Goal 3- Provide appropriately designed amenities through a combination of usable private yard open space and common open space, integration of mature trees and new planting with substantial trees, accent plants with a variety of texture and color; lighting, and pavement materials.
- o Goal 4- Utilize building designs that create identity and visual interest. Vary massing and heights to create separation and relief. Promote privacy through placement of openings and integrate interior space with private open space where feasible. On larger sites, a variety of building types is strongly encouraged.
- o Goal 5- Promote sustainability with green building techniques and materials, encourage solar energy installation, site design principles that provide shading of pavement, manage stormwater runoff, reduce landscape maintenance, and support biking and walking.



### 2.1 Issues of Size and Scale

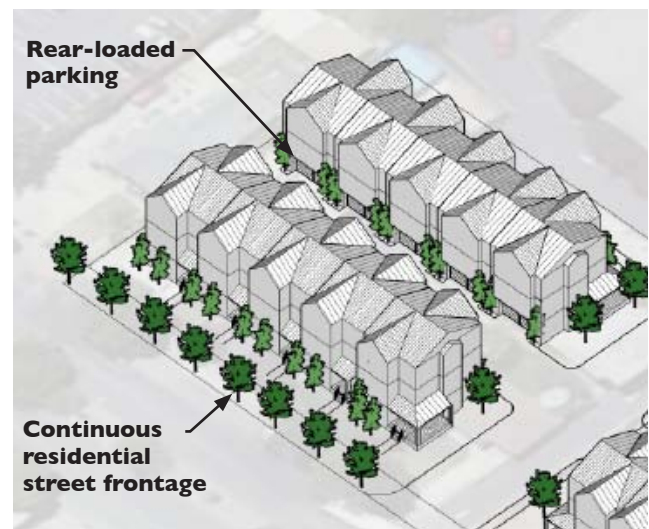
Multi-family projects in Fremont vary in size and scale. Projects include small (0-2 acres), medium (2-5 acres), and larger (5+ acres) land developments that typically range in site density from 10 to 30 units per acre. In general, a hierarchy of priorities exist in this document based on the size and scale of development.

The following points illustrate the important contextual issues for each size of development, as anticipated to be achieved by adherence to the guidelines:

- o Small sites (0-2 acres) should act as “infill sites” and respond appropriately to the surrounding neighborhood in scale, character, building design, details and materials.
- o Medium-size sites (2-5 acres) should respond to surrounding context in scale and character, but take advantage of increased opportunities for mixture of housing types and density options. Connectivity should be incorporated where possible, with a hierarchy of streets, auto courts, and paseos.
- o Larger sites (5+ acres) should provide a variety of housing types, centralized common open space opportunities, and an interconnected system of streets and pathways connecting into the surrounding neighborhood context.

### 2.2 Building Types and Densities

There are several recognized multi-family building types that range from smaller attached or detached townhouse developments to larger stacked flats / townhouses with a podium garage. A summary of the significant features of each of these different building types follows; an explanation of design terms (e.g., “front-” and “rear-loaded” townhouses) can be found in the glossary. Each type has specific issues and is looked at separately within these guidelines.



*Rear-loaded townhouses provide a continuous front or “face” to the street, and have garages facing the rear of the property.*

### 2.3 Detached Townhouses

Detached townhouses are units typically situated in a row separated by private open space between units. Units generally are more uniform in appearance than small lot detached homes and likely include some three-story units.

Features:

- Building separation: typically 8-12 feet.
- Front-loaded with the garage facing the street or "front" of the property, or rear-loaded with garage facing the rear of the property or a private street.
- Typical built density: 10-14 units per acre.
- The buildings' design focus should be individual unit identity.
- Side yards provide usable private open space, and the site is organized around common open space.



*These detached townhouse condominiums have approximately 10 feet of side separation between structures. The homes have build-ings that are individualized and have a presence that addresses the pedestrian paseo.*

### 2.4 Attached Townhouses

Attached townhouses are units typically situated in a row of at least three or more units where there is no separation between units. These can be designed as either front- or rear-loaded.

Features:

- Generally uniform massing with individualized separate unit entrances.
- Front-loaded with the garage facing the street or "front" of the property, or "rear-loaded" with the garage facing the "rear" of the property.
- Greater efficiency of space without side yards and provide for greater density opportunities.
- Private open space for each unit is typically provided by a front patio or balconies.
- Typical built density: between 14-25 units per acre.
- The building design focus should be on overall building appearance.
- Units organized around "public" spaces and sites around common space amenities.



*Attached townhouses (front-loaded)*



*Attached townhouses (rear-loaded)*

### 2.5 Stacked Flats With Surface Parking

Stacked Flats are units arranged on a single level and surrounded by units either above or below each unit.

Features:

- o Typically 2-4 stories of single-level units stacked on top of each other
- o Individual unit access can be from either common interior corridor or by discrete exterior entrances
- o Typical built density: 20-30+ units per acre
- o The design focus is on the whole building, less on individual units
- o Common open space is typically provided in assembled areas of courtyards or common ground space
- o Private open space is typically provided in the form of balconies



*Stacked flats or flats with townhouses above with shared surface parking have individual unit entries.*

### 2.6 Townhouses/Stacked Flats Above Podium Parking

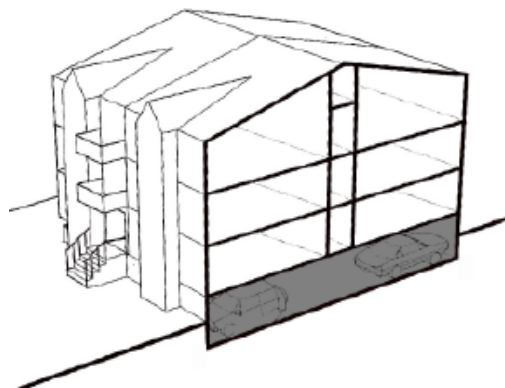
Townhouses or stacked flats are units built over a submerged or partially-submerged parking garage or "podium," rather than with individual garages.

Features:

- o Typically 3-4 stories or more in height above a parking podium (garage)
- o May or may not have additional surface parking
- o Often appear more urban in appearance with raised stoops above a partially submerged parking podium
- o Typical built density: 30-60 units per acre
- o The design focus is on the entire building, not individual units
- o Urban in appearance due to height, mass, and scale
- o Common open space is typically provided



*Podium townhouses can be built at higher overall densities, and have many of the same outward characteristics as rear-loaded townhouses.*



*A corridor building with stacked flats or townhouses above a submerged or partially-submerged parking level.*



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### 3.1 Site planning of large, medium, and small sites

#### LARGE SITE HIGHLIGHTS:

##### I. Connectivity:

- Streets, auto courts, paseos and pedestrian ways should not only connect internally but also connect to adjacent streets in neighboring developments.
- Pedestrian and bike paths should be used where street connections to adjacent neighborhoods are infeasible.
- Use pedestrian ways for internal connections.

##### II. Hierarchy of Streets:

- Clear distinction in scale, landscape treatment, and orientation between public/private streets, auto courts and pedestrian paseos.
- Auto courts should be designed to act as secondary circulation to remove service functions and garage access from public and private streets.
- Distribute guest parking.

##### III. Building Frontage and Orientation:

- Units should face streets, open spaces and internal private streets wherever possible.
- Building fronts should include porches, door entries facing streets.

##### IV. Open space:

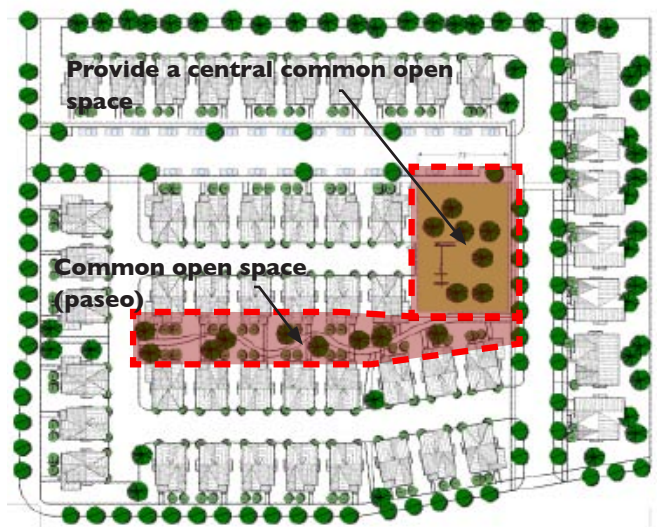
- Large open space should be the fundamental organizing element of the site plan.
- Integrate large existing trees and other natural features into the open space.
- Common open space should be centralized and directly accessible for all units when feasible. In new development it should be linked to adjacent parks and paths with pedestrian ways.



*Buildings should face and define the edges of open space.*



*Streets, auto courts, and paseos should connect internally and to adjacent streets.*



## MEDIUM AND SMALL SITE HIGHLIGHTS:

### I. Privacy:

- Paseos and private streets can provide separation between adjacent property and increase privacy.
- Small site developments should incorporate front-loaded units in order to use private rear yards as a buffer to adjacent uses that have rear yards.
- Private spaces should be provided at side or rear yards
- Semi-private open spaces may be provided at front yards.



*Parking areas should use special paving or pavers when shared with pedestrian walks.*

### II. Open Space:

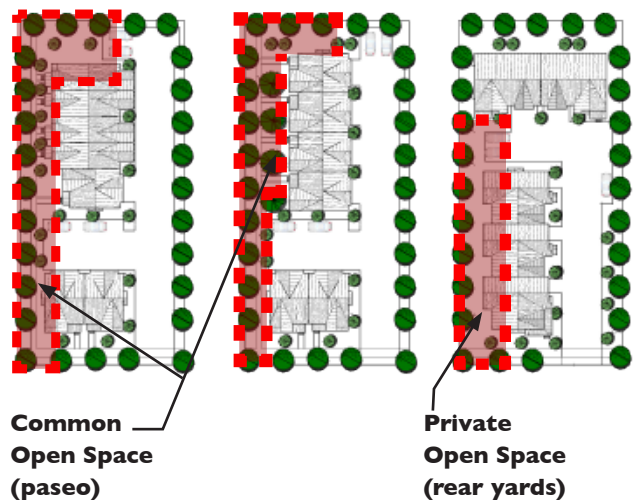
- Buildings should define the edges of and face onto the common open space.
- Location should be clearly and easily accessible.
- Common open space should be consolidated in one location to allow for high usability and sustainability.
- Small sites may not require common open space.



*Buildings appropriately addressing common open space.*

### III. Parking:

- Guest parking may be difficult to provide on small sites with limited space, however should occur at the rear of the site, and may encroach somewhat into the rear setback (see Section 4.6)
- Shared vehicle and pedestrian circulation areas should utilize special pavers for pedestrian ways traversing parking areas.





### 4.1 Connect new development to surrounding neighborhoods

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Streets should be the first choice to connect to surrounding neighborhoods.
- II. Develop an overall connected network of streets and auto courts on larger sites.
- III. Anticipate future connections to adjacent parcels to provide for future opportunities.
- IV. Provide traffic calming techniques throughout developments.
- V. Include adequate emergency vehicle access.



*RECOMMENDED* - Connect the internal circulation network to that of the adjacent neighborhoods.

#### getting there:

- o Extend streets from neighboring developments into the development site.
- o Connect neighborhoods with pedestrian and bicycle connections, especially where street connections are infeasible due to site constraints.
- o Provide an overall connected network of streets, auto courts, and pedestrian walkways on larger sites to provide emergency vehicle access.
- o Traffic calming measures may include crosswalks, narrowing streets with bulbouts, and/or textured paving to slow through-traffic.
- o Inform the public and property owners adjacent to temporary street stubs of eventual through circulation. Install street signage at the street terminus to reinforce and alert residents of eventual through connection.
- o Avoid repeated dead end street stubs.



*RECOMMENDED* - Pedestrian connections should connect neighborhoods where street connections are not possible.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Auto and pedestrian access points should not be gated or closed off to the public as secondary features



## 4.2 Complete circulation system for cars, bikes, and people

### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Connect the overall network of private streets, auto courts, and pedestrian walkways on larger sites.
- II. Traffic calming techniques should be used throughout housing development sites.
- III. Use color, texture, and landscape to reinforce purpose



*RECOMMENDED* - Streets should include adequate space for on-street parking, sidewalks, and planting strips.

### getting there:

- o Streets should include sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lights and continuous landscape planters with a regular pattern of tightly-spaced street trees to help create a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- o Traffic calming features, such as on-street parking, bulbouts, and crosswalks reinforce a pedestrian environment.
- o Define pedestrian space with differentiated paving.
- o Include space for canopy trees and shading.
- o In smaller developments where private streets function as access and pedestrian circulation areas, special paving should be used for the shared space to reinforce a shared pedestrian and auto space.
- o Private streets must conform to the City of Fremont's street design standards and geometrics and provide emergency access wherever applicable.



*RECOMMENDED* - Special paving can delineate shared pedestrian and auto space.



*RECOMMENDED* - A connected network of streets and paseos on larger sites

### 4.3 Well-designed and adequate circulation system

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Private streets should not serve as a primary pedestrian circulation routes on site.
- II. Use landscape to soften the appearance of private streets.
- III. Private street design should avoid the "canyon" effect.
- IV. Shade impervious paved areas where possible.
- V. When two narrow sites are adjacent to each other, a single curb cut for both developments is desirable where possible.



*RECOMMENDED* - Private streets should be lined with accent trees and planters to help soften the appearance of multiple garage doors.



*RECOMMENDED* - An appropriately designed auto court with articulating upper stories that include bays, balconies, and modulating building mass reduces the "canyon" perception of a private street.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Building massing which dominates an auto court or private street without landscape relief creates "canyon effects."

#### getting there:

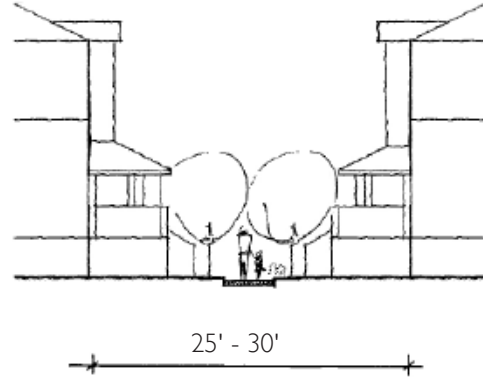
- o Primary pedestrian circulation should occur on paseos or on sidewalks adjacent to streets. Private streets should primarily serve as vehicular and service access for the development.
- o Trees should be provided in between building spaces that are minimum 10' wide when the adjacent second story steps back at least 15'; and 20' wide when there is no second story setback.
- o The building's upper massing should step back to reduce canyon effect of private streets. Overhangs, eaves, balconies, and stepping building mass can reduce the canyon perception.
- o Integrate stormwater treatment system with the private street design.

### 4.4 High quality pedestrian access and open space at paseos

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

##### **Paseos:**

- I. Paseos should serve as the front or "face" of development when an internal street is not feasible.
- II. Use paseos to provide walking access to front doors of units and design them wide enough to be open space.
- III. Landscape to create a visually appealing high quality open space with an emphasis on privacy, green space, and for mature trees.
- IV. Paseos should be well-lit for pedestrians without adding glare to adjacent residences.
- V. Connect paseos to form internal walkway networks within developments.



*RECOMMENDED* - Double-loaded interior paseos should be 25'-30' wide from building face to building face.



*RECOMMENDED* - Landscaped paseos which act as linear open spaces and pedestrian connections.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Narrow, dark paseos which function as only pedestrian walkways.

#### getting there:

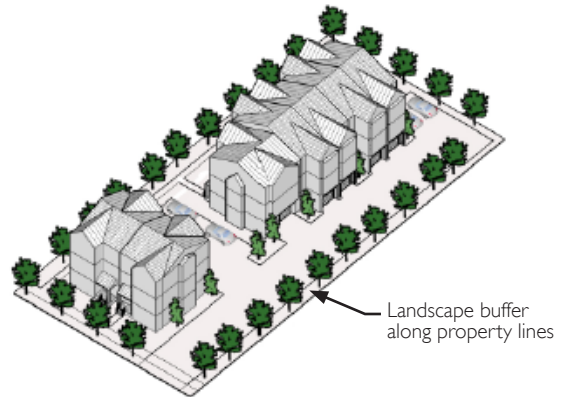
- o Provide wider spaces between taller buildings.
- o A minimum 15' width should be provided for narrow small sites adjacent to a side property line, and 25'-30' width for double-loaded interior paseos unless the design and massing solution provides relief from the canyon effect.
- o Large windows, front doors, porches, stoops, bays, and projections are architectural elements that should be used to provide a front or "face" to building facades that line a paseo.
- o Stagger entries and windows and strategically locate landscape for increased privacy.
- o Reduce width of paseo when extra width could be added to enhance common usable space.
- o Screen all air conditioning condenser units with appropriate landscape or architecturally integrated low walls.



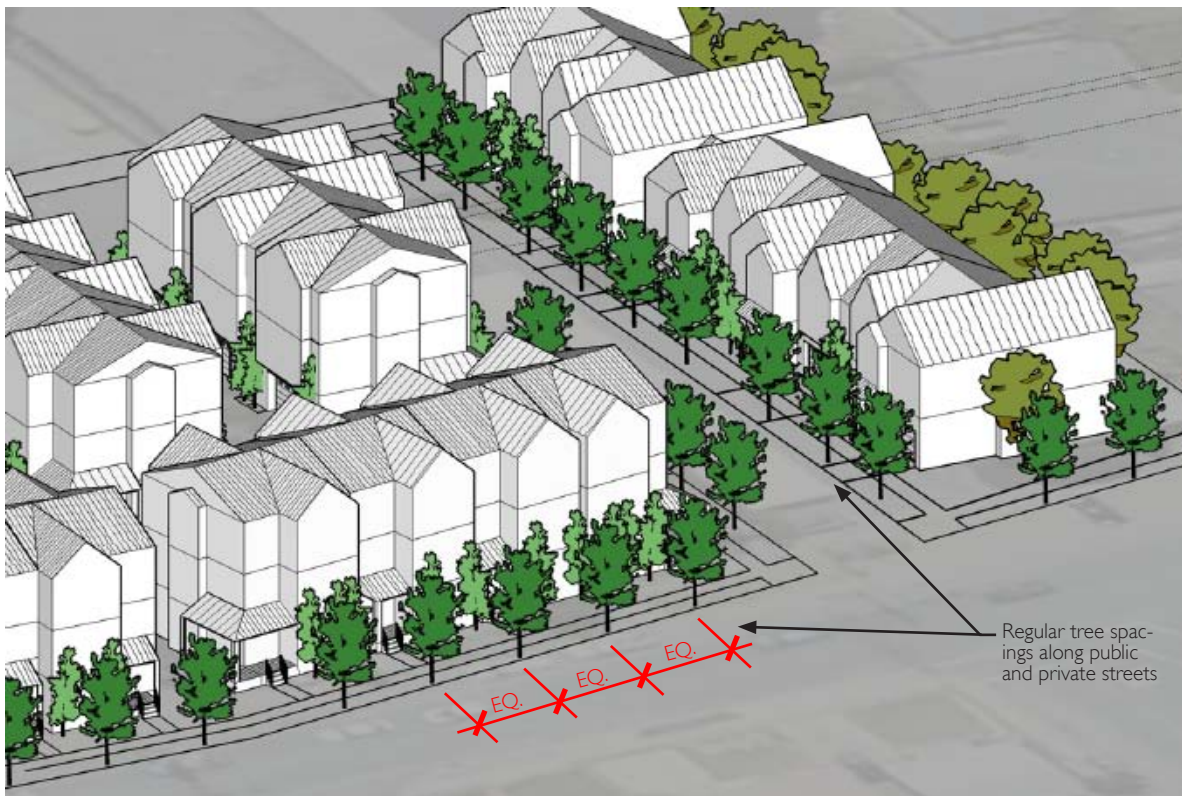
### 4.5 Landscape treatments that enhance new buildings

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. New development should preserve and protect healthy trees and natural areas and focus open space around them.
- II. Provide for well shaded streets with one tree per unit in townhouse developments.
- III. A landscape buffer should be used where private streets abut property lines.
- IV. Regular tree spacing should line all public and internal private street where possible.



*RECOMMENDED* - A landscape buffer should be used where private streets abut property lines.



*RECOMMENDED* - Regular tree spacing and patterns (at least one tree per unit along public street frontages) should line all public and internal private street where possible.



### *getting there:*

- o Create unique and interesting open space contiguous or adjacent to existing large trees.
- o Integrate natural attributes and topography to create a neighborhood feature or focal point on larger sites.
- o Provide tall deciduous trees for summer shade and winter solar access.
- o Provide trees and landscape for front and rear yards, adjacent to garages and along property lines, especially at paseos. Private streets should also include landscape and trees to buffer adjacent property development.
- o Small or narrow sites should provide a minimum 6' wide landscape buffer along the length of a street adjacent to residential development. Large site should incorporate a minimum 10' wide landscape buffer.
- o Plant trees between building clusters and breaks, typically every 5 to 6 units.



*RECOMMENDED - Regular tree spacing along public and internal streets.*



*RECOMMENDED - Trees and landscape treatment should line paseos.*



*RECOMMENDED - Landscape at entries including planting, structures, sculpture, low walls are encouraged, however signage alone should not be used to demarcate an entrance.*



*RECOMMENDED - Private streets should be lined with accent trees and planters to help soften the appearance of multiple garage doors.*

### 4.6 Adequate guest parking

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

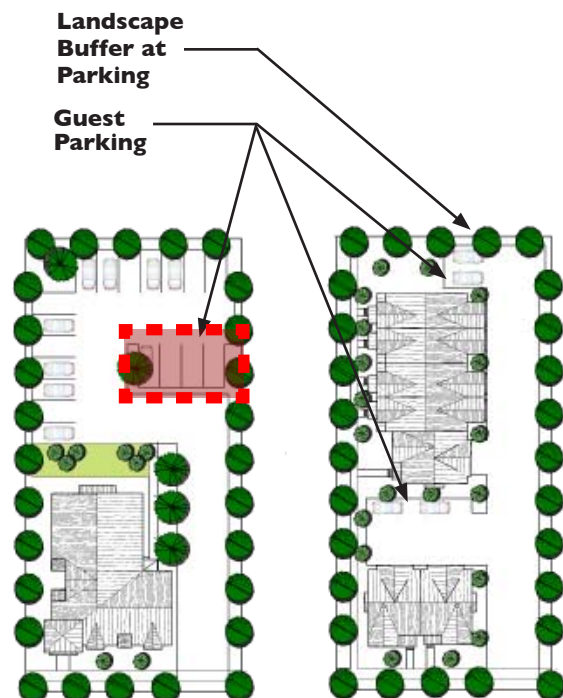
- I. Provide sufficient and accessible guest parking appropriately dispersed on site.
- II. Provide on-site guest parking along streets such as parallel parking wherever possible rather than in lots.
- III. Parking should not be located between a building and any public sidewalk or street (front yard areas).

#### getting there:

- o Parking requires adequate maneuvering areas for vehicle turnarounds.
- o Connect units to parking areas via walkways.
- o Consider non-paved or pervious surfaces for guest parking areas.
- o Guest parking may be located on private streets, in parallel or perpendicular (90 degree) parking spots. They may be located between groups of units.
- o On deep narrow sites, guest parking should be located at the rear of the site, and may encroach into the rear setback as long as an adequate landscape buffer between properties is maintained.
- o Vehicular turnaround space may occur within the rear setback if an adequate landscape buffer between paved area and property line is maintained.
- o In larger developments, guest parking should be located in parallel, perpendicular, or angled spaces along private streets or dispersed within auto courts.



Developments may accommodate guest parking with parallel parking along private streets.



On deep narrow sites, guest parking may encroach into the rear setback if an adequate landscape buffer between properties is maintained.

### 4.7 Coordinate and screen utilities to minimize visual clutter

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Coordination between all design and utility disciplines should occur well in advance to ensure that site planning and landscape design complementarily work in confined spaces.
- II. Utilities such as electrical, telephone, cable, transformers, and other utilities should be placed underground.
- III. Utility locations shall not interfere with the viability of tree maturity or with stormwater treatment devices.
- IV. Minimize visibility of above-ground transformers, meters, and other utilities.

#### *getting there:*

- o Above-ground utility transformers and other above-grade equipment should not be located within the front yard along a street.
- o Above-ground utilities should be incorporated into the design of the building and integrated into landscaped areas to minimize visual impact. Options include insets into building facades and screening with landscaping or low walls.
- o Cluster utility meters in readily accessible locations.



*RECOMMENDED - Well-organized clustered utilities in a well-landscaped unobtrusive location.*



*RECOMMENDED - Meters and other utilities should be screened with landscape or low walls when above ground.*



### 4.8 Fencing to address privacy between common and private space

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Use fences to add visual interest and to integrate into the architecture of the buildings.
- II. Fences which are visible from public and private streets should have additional detailing to provide visual interest.
- III. Fences at front yards typically provide separation of semi-public space, and should be designed with transparency.
- IV. Fences at rear or side yards typically provide a higher degree of privacy, and should be used to enclose private open space where appropriate.



*RECOMMENDED* - Fencing along public or private streets should have additional detailing to provide visual interest. Pickets offer a degree of transparency while still providing separation.



*RECOMMENDED* - Fencing should be designed to integrate into the architecture of the buildings and add visual interest in its detail, materials or color.

#### getting there:

- o Low walls or fences (maximum 4' high) are encouraged at front yards or setbacks in order to provide separation.
- o Accents such as trellises, arched gates or arbors can be used to provide visual interest and demarcation to entrances.
- o Materials such as wood or metal pickets offer degrees of transparency which provide separation from semi-public space without creating total enclosure at front yards.
- o Higher fences may be placed along side and rear property lines in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, but exceeding 6' in height is not recommended unless allowed under exception by the zoning ordinance or required to attenuate noise (i.e. sound walls).



*RECOMMENDED* - Accents such as trellises, gates or arbors can be used to provide visual interest and demarcation to entrances.



## 5.1 Usable common open space

### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Aggregate common open space to make large usable areas that serves as the central focus.
- II. Common open space should be well-defined by streets and buildings in all developments.
- III. Small development sites should prioritize private spaces over common spaces.
- IV. Private open space such as porches, balconies, and patios should be integrated into the building design and provide privacy for the unit.

### getting there:

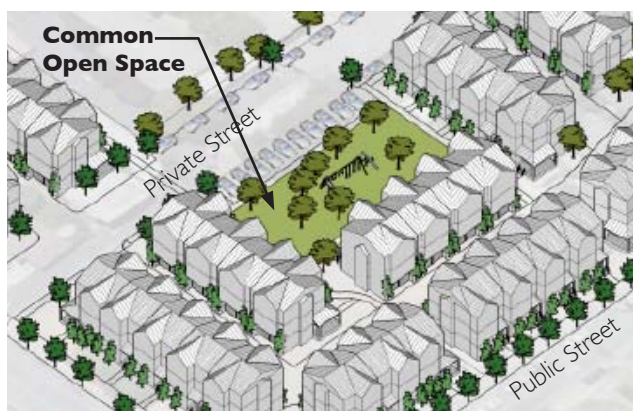
- o Use buildings to line the edges of open space provide an edge to the open space and define its boundary. Streets can also serve this function, but buildings are recommended wherever possible.
- o Large site developments may have one central feature and other small diverse features.
- o Rear-loaded units should provide private open space through porches, balconies, and small front yards easily accessed from the interior of the unit.
- o Front-loaded units should provide most private open space as enclosed rear yards; large and medium sites should also have a central feature.
- o Common open space should be designed to provide outdoor active and passive uses.
- o Stormwater treatment devices should not be located in open spaces that would limit their use but may be adjacent to create a more open atmosphere.



*RECOMMENDED - Common open space incorporated into a multi-family development.*



*RECOMMENDED - Common open space should be designed to provide outdoor active and passive uses.*

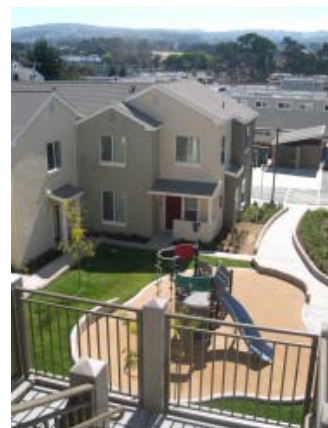


*RECOMMENDED - Buildings that face open spaces define the edges of the open space.*

### 5.2 Amenities within common open spaces

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Common amenity areas should be centralized, and scaled appropriately to the size of the development.
- II. Common open spaces should provide adequate areas for playgrounds, tot lots, and open play areas for children.
- III. Tot lots should be located in convenient, and highly visible locations to ensure informal surveillance by residents.



*RECOMMENDED* - Entries and windows should face onto common open space and play areas to provide informal surveillance and safety.

#### getting there:

- o Size of common open space should be relative to the size of the development in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance.
- o Formal or informal activity fields should be provided for large developments of more than 5+ acres in size. Recreational facilities can include swimming pools, tennis courts or ballfields.
- o Buildings should define the edges of common open space.
- o Entries and windows should face onto common open space and play areas to provide informal surveillance and safety.



*RECOMMENDED* - Common open spaces should be centrally located and of a substantial enough size for gathering and recreation.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Play areas should not be isolated away from buildings and public spaces.

### 5.3 Usable private open space

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

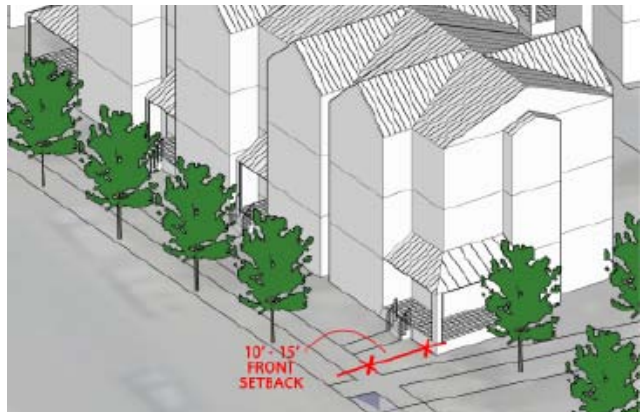
- I. Front yards should provide semi-private space but should not be enclosed with walls.
- II. In private side yards: privacy should be achieved with low walls, landscape, fences, and appropriate placement of windows.
- III. In private rear yards: width and depth standards should be used to ensure usability and easy access from the interior of the unit.

#### getting there:

- o Front yards can include low walls or low fences to provide separation from the sidewalk edge and create a sense of definition and enclosure.
- o Front yards should provide space for an entry, walk, front stoop or porch and landscape, and balance hardscape (paving) and landscape.
- o Buildings should be set back in a similar manner to the surrounding context. A setback of 10-15' from the sidewalk will provide an adequate front yard, unless a reduction in setback is warranted to foster a pedestrian environment. A setback of 5-10' may be appropriate in more urban, mixed use, transit-oriented environments or where surrounding context dictates a smaller setback.
- o Side yards can be made private and usable through low walls and landscape. They should feature both landscaped and hardscaped (paved) areas. If patios are used, they should be raised 1'-3' but less than 4'-5' above grade.
- o Privacy at rear yards can be achieved with privacy fences no higher than 6' tall.
- o Rear yards can provide private open space with a combination of both landscaped and hardscaped (paved) areas.



*RECOMMENDED* - Porches and patios should be raised 1'-3' but no more than 4'-5' above grade.



*RECOMMENDED* - 10-15' front setbacks provide an adequate front yard and space for an entry, walk, front stoop or porch.



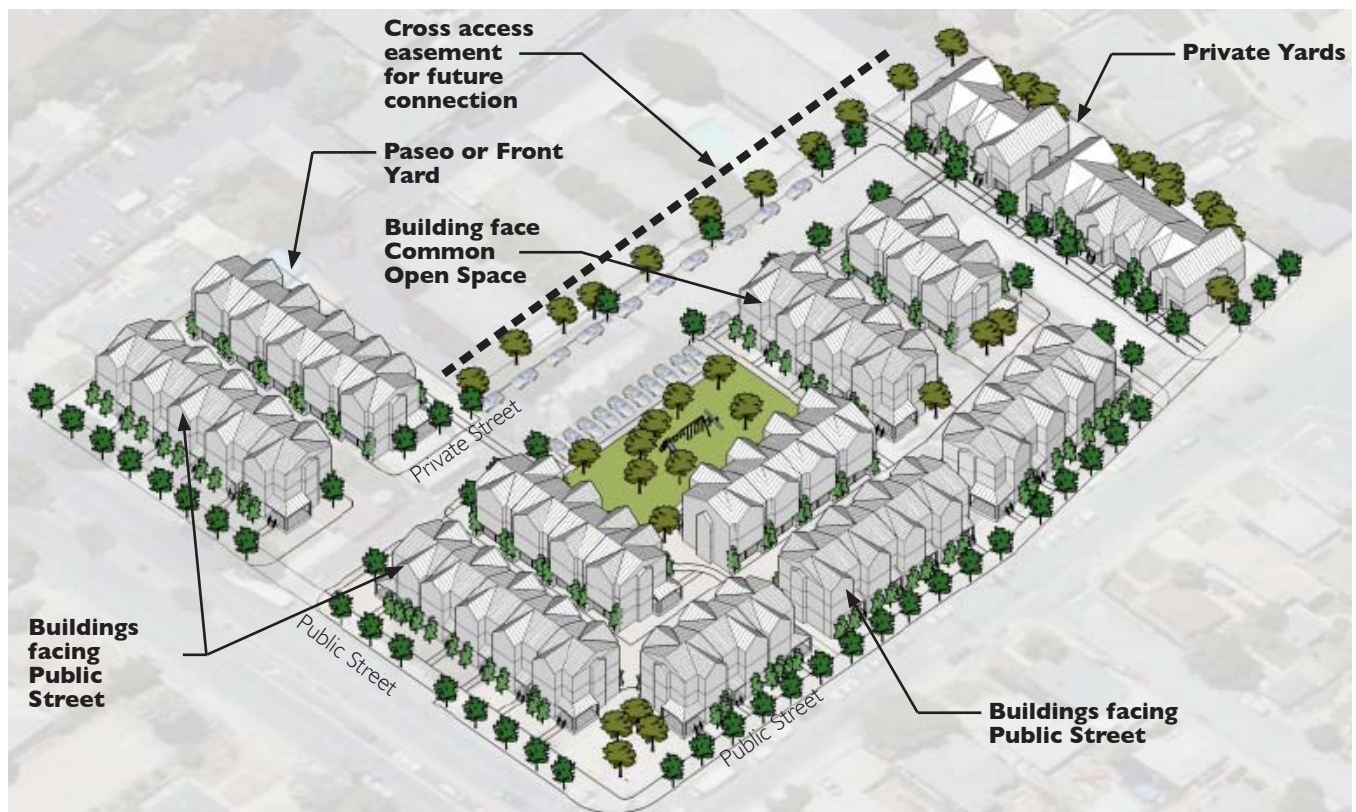
*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Balconies that are unusable because of their insufficient size.



### 6.1 Site and building orientation to enhance public space character

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Orient buildings to face public/private streets and open space.
- II. Include building entrances as primary building features opening to common open space or streets.
- III. Use corner treatment and architectural detailing on narrow small sites where it is not possible for front facades of buildings to face a street.
- IV. Locate private uses and private space along private streets, side yards, and rear of properties where possible.



## getting there:

- Building fronts provide definitive edges to common open space, public and private streets, and paseos.
- Building entrance features such as porches, stoops, front walkways, windows and front doors provide a public "face" and orientation to a building; these features on the public street side of the building provide a building face on the street.
- Corner or end unit architectural treatment can include wrap-around porches and facade detailing in order for a building to face the public street, paseo, or open space.
- Clear address numbers that are identifiable for each unit where buildings face the street, paseo, or open space provide an orientation feature to the public space or street.
- Private and semi-private spaces such as patios, porches and balconies can be delineated by low walls, landscape, and grade changes.
- Avoid intruding into open space with disruptive utility and service features.



*RECOMMENDED* - Corner treatment such as wrap-around porches and bays that provide a public "face" or front to end units.



*RECOMMENDED* - Building fronts add definitive edges to common open space.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Corner or end units that lack articulation and detailing on side elevations and do not orient to open space.



### 6.2 Variety to create interest and individuality

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Create streets that are balanced on both sides in massing and building character.
- II. Include at least two different building types on sites larger than 2 acres.
- III. In larger developments, create one building type on each block, preferably facing each other, to create a balanced street. Mixing building types within the same block or paseo does not help to maintain a consistent street front.



*RECOMMENDED - Distinguish building units and unit types by alternating roof types and color schemes.*

#### getting there:

- o Higher density multi-family building types such as stacked flats above a podium may be desirable on portions of larger sites, and therefore provide variety within the larger site.
- o Distinguish building units and unit types by alternating roof types and color schemes in to add variety and unit individuality. This guideline does not apply to building types (see below).
- o Alternating roof types and color schemes on identical building types creates a "cookie cutter" effect and is not recommended.
- o Avoid the monotonous appearance of a single color application on buildings.
- o When two narrow sites are adjacent to each other, similar building types can be used when facing each other to complement the adjacent site development.
- o Consider the incorporation of universal design practices.



*NOT RECOMMENDED - Single color application on buildings*



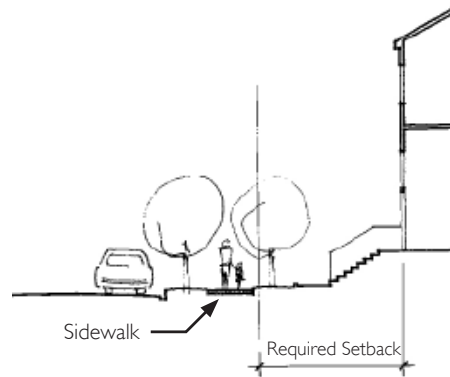
*NOT RECOMMENDED - Alternating color schemes should not be a substitute for providing different building types.*



### 6.3 Create a public, welcoming, and pedestrian-friendly building fronts

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Building entries should be the prominent feature of the front facade and identify access to individual units.
- II. Building entries that face a public street, private street, or common space should be the first choice for entry location.
- III. Porches and balconies that face streets should be semi-transparent and be incorporated into the materials and design of the building.
- IV. Porches and balconies should be designed to encourage seating and use consistent with the minimum sizing criteria of the Zoning Ordinance.



*RECOMMENDED* - Porches and porch stairs may be permitted to encroach into the front setback as long as the main building face remains at or behind the setback.

#### getting there:

- o Create a centralized building entrance for larger buildings, particularly those with podiums, lobbies and corridors. Individual entrances for at-grade units are also encouraged.
- o Conspicuously locate address number signs to clearly identify each unit, or at internalized entrances at larger buildings.
- o Include stoops and front porches at building entries that face a street, paseo, or other public space.
- o Porches and porch stairs may be permitted to encroach into the front setback as long as the main building face remains at or behind the setback.



*RECOMMENDED* - Building entries should be the primary feature of front facades.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Building entries that are not prominent and appear secondary to the garage.

### 6.4 Create attractive, well-proportioned contextual buildings

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Use taller massing to define significant building features, such as corners and terminus points.
- II. Break up building mass with facade articulation on all sides.
- III. Unit breaks should occur every 5-6 units.
- IV. Massing should step down when adjacent to lower height residential development.
- V. Avoid top-heavy appearance in massing.
- VI. Distance between buildings should correspond to overall massing, step backs, and heights.
- VII. Buildings should typically have a vertical proportion or appearance.

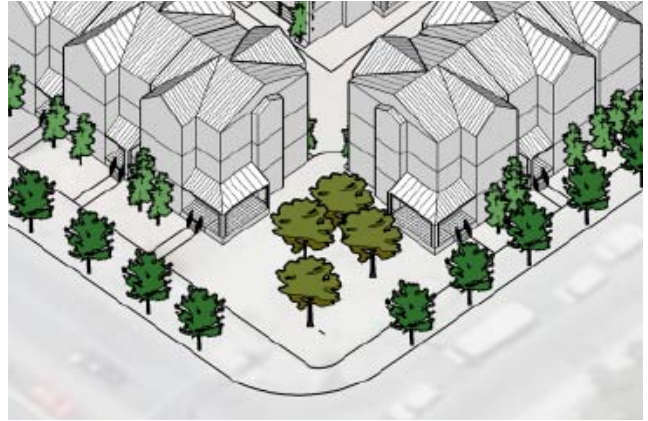


*RECOMMENDED* - Taller massings define building features such as corners.

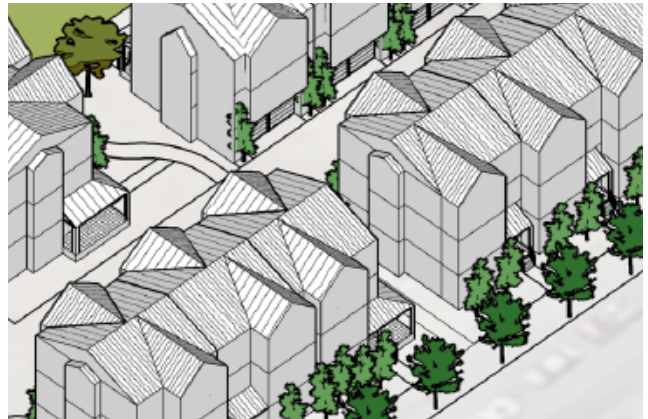


## *getting there:*

- Incorporate massing variations and setbacks on the top floor to avoid a top-heavy appearance for buildings that are 3-stories tall, particularly along private streets.
- Facade articulation of porches, projection eaves, and overhangs, and other architectural elements such as bay windows, chimneys, and porches which provide residential scale and help to break up the building mass.
- Break up long horizontal eaves and roof elements across the facade with gables, building projections, and/or other articulation.
- Articulate corner and end units with the same attention and treatment to details on side elevations as the front facades.
- Gaps between rowhouses should be a minimum of 10' wide when second story steps back 15 feet or more, and 15-20' wide when second story does not step back. When windows are opposite each other, the building to building spacing should be 20'. (Note, this applies to locations between rows of townhouses, e.g., blocks of 6-units, and not between each detached unit).



*RECOMMENDED* - Architectural elements should be used to define block corners, open space areas, and gateway locations.



*RECOMMENDED* - Breaks in rows of units should occur every 5-6 units.



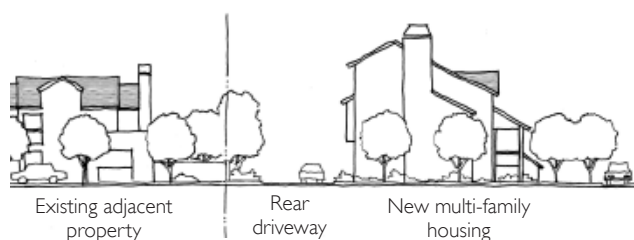
*NOT RECOMMENDED* - 3-story buildings which are extruded forward and overhang the street appear excessively bulky.



## 6.5 Respect the scale and privacy of adjacent properties

### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Massing and orientation of rowhouses should be stepped to minimize visual and privacy impact to neighboring properties.
- II. Rear-loaded townhouses should be the first choice when facing public streets.
- III. Paseos should be used to provide open space when development faces a side or rear property line. Minimum width should be 15' at narrow small sites and 20'-25' at medium and large sites.
- IV. Landscape treatment should be used when aligning a private street along a property line. Minimum buffer width should be 6' at narrow small sites and 10' at medium and large sites.



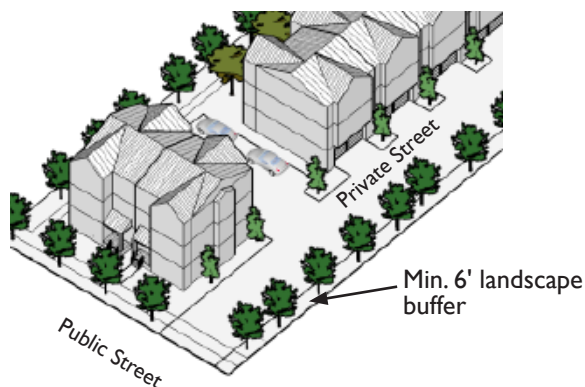
*RECOMMENDED* - Rear driveways and landscaping can be used as a buffer between buildings, where townhouses are designed to back up to adjacent properties.



*RECOMMENDED* - Where rear-loaded townhouses face a side or rear property line, the setback should be a wide landscaped paseo connecting unit entries.

### getting there:

- o Massing and orientation of townhouses can be stepped back at the third story to minimize views from windows and upper floor balconies into neighboring properties.
- o A backyard-to-backyard orientation creates a natural buffer between adjacent developments when front-loaded townhouses are used along side or rear property lines.
- o Landscaped paseos should be a minimum 20-25' wide when development faces a side or rear property line in order to create a front or "face" to the development. However, paseos may be minimum 15' wide on narrow small sites.
- o Private streets along property lines should include a minimum 10' wide buffer to provide an attractive landscape feature and privacy to new development. This dimension may be reduced to 6' on narrow small sites when abutting residential development.



*RECOMMENDED* - Internal private streets that abut adjacent residential development should include a minimum 6' landscape buffer at narrow small sites, and 10' at medium and large sites.

### 6.6 Architectural detailing to define appropriate character and quality

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Use eave and parapet details to break up building massing.
- II. Emphasize vertical proportions of individual units rather than horizontal building massing.



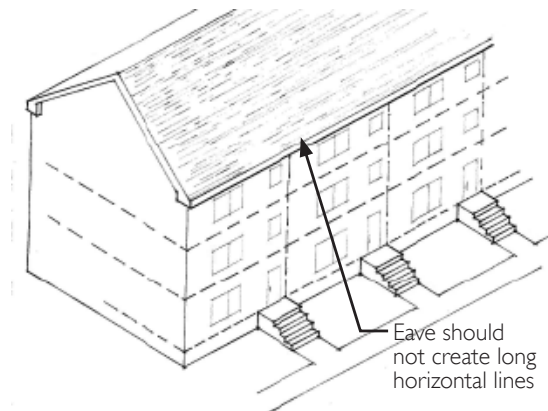
*RECOMMENDED* - Trellis and column material and proportions should be designed compatibly with project architecture so as to not appear applied to the building facade.

#### getting there:

- o Solid strong detailing embodies quality of construction.
- o A more solid base and body of a facade with a lighter more detailed top helps to ground a building and reduce an overall bulky appearance.
- o Details such as railings, materials, windows, trellis, trim, eaves, and cornices are critical to displaying a building's quality.
- o Eaves and rooflines are encouraged to emphasize vertical proportions. They should not create long horizontal lines but rather be broken up with gables, building projections, and articulation to emphasize the individual quality of the units.



*RECOMMENDED* - Eave and rooflines should emphasize vertical proportions.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - continuous horizontal eave line.

### 6.7 Consistent and harmonious color and material palette

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. New multi-family developments should be designed with high-quality, durable materials.
- II. Changes in color and materials at inside corners of building facades.
- III. "Piecemeal" and frequent changes in materials should be avoided.



*RECOMMENDED* - Building mass and elements should be differentiated by a change in detail, color or material.



*RECOMMENDED* - Fencing and wall materials should be designed so as to be appropriate to and compatible with project architecture.

#### getting there:

- o Building mass and elements that are differentiated by a change in detail, color, or material achieve greater emphasis on the massing.
- o Changes in materials and color generally should not occur in the same plane as this may result in a "thin" or applied quality. Changes that correspond to variations in building mass or are separated by a building element achieve greater emphasis on the massing.
- o Although differentiation of units is desired, using dramatically different architectural styles unit to unit within the same development is generally discouraged.
- o Fencing and wall materials should use similar or identical materials as used on buildings, and should use the same or complimentary color palette.
- o Artificial or pre-fabricated replicate materials are discouraged at the pedestrian level.
- o Materials application of texture, grain composition is important.



*NOT RECOMMENDED* - Materials and color changes on the same plane.



### 6.8 Appropriately illuminated streets and pedestrian environments

#### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

- I. Street lighting shall emphasize pedestrian scale and orientation.
- II. Emphasize lighting along sidewalks, streets, driveways, paseos and parking areas for the safety and security.
- III. Light fixtures should be a character supporting element of the development and residential environment.
- IV. Ensure uniform lighting conditions with connections to common association meters or enforcement through homeowner association's CC&R's if site lighting connections are made to individual unit meters.



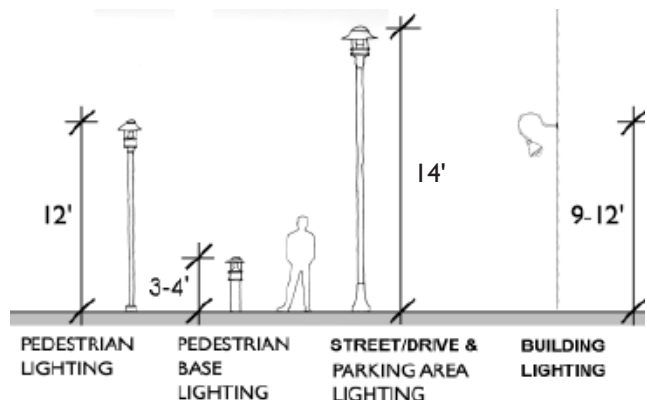
RECOMMENDED - Lighting furnishings that are pedestrian-scaled.

#### getting there:

- o Pedestrian-scaled lighting should be no taller than 14' -16' in height depending on context.
- o Use bollard-type lighting rather than porch lights for paseos and other walkways.
- o Control all illumination with cutoffs and primarily direct light downward.
- o Lighting should not produce a glare or be of an intensity inappropriate for a residential environment.
- o Lighting levels must be adequate and uniformly dispersed in all pedestrian, parking, and open space areas.
- o Lighting should not be placed on buildings as wall packs along private streets and paseos. Wall packs along double-loaded private streets can be considered.
- o Lighting should be high-efficiency to reduce ongoing utility costs and gas emissions.



RECOMMENDED - Lighting furnishings that are appropriate for the character of the development and a residential environment.



## 7.1 Environmentally-responsible design

### DESIGN GUIDELINES:

The City of Fremont supports sustainability as a whole building concept that starts with site planning opportunities and continues through construction of healthy and efficient building interiors. The City has adopted requirements for green building techniques as part of the CalGreen Building Code and the GreenPoint Rated System. Additionally the City has other sustainability policies of incorporating Bay Friendly landscape principles; irrigation efficiency; integration of low impact development and stormwater treatment (reuse and treatment); and mandatory construction waste diversion and recycling requirement for all residential construction.

This section of the Design Guidelines is an introduction to some of the basic concepts and principles of green building that are frequently incorporated into standard development practices. Please refer to the most up to date reference manuals, building code, and checklists.

#### Design Guidelines

- I. Address sustainability from a whole building perspective of site, landscape, energy, materials and water.
- II. Incorporate pre-plumbing and pre-wiring of homes for easy installation of solar water heating and photo-voltaic (PV) solar panels.
- III. Optimize building performance through site planning and building orientation that enhances solar and radiant heating access.
- IV. Incorporate shading of impervious surfaces and buildings to reduce the heat island effect caused by urban development.
- V. Employ Bay Friendly landscape design principles on selection and location of plants; coordinate landscape design with required stormwater treatment measures.
- VI. Use recycled content and renewable materials for building construction. Emphasize locally sourced materials to reduce indirect environmental effects of building products.

## getting there:

- o Use materials such as cement board and wood siding that are durable or "green" building materials.
- o Solar energy can be harnessed through photo-voltaic panels and solar hot water systems to reduce energy dependency and electrical demand. Pre-wiring for these systems should occur with building construction to ensure less difficulty for future installations.
- o Solar water heating systems for pools
- o Solar shading should be incorporated on south and west facing windows, to reduce heat gain in summer and lower the demand on HVAC systems.
- o Energy Star appliances should be used wherever possible to reduce energy demands.
- o Buildings should be designed to take advantage of natural ventilation to reduce the need and demand on HVAC systems. Operable windows , attic fans, and ceiling fans should be located to take advantage of prevailing wind patterns and natural air flow.
- o Installation of any of the following:
  - Water efficient appliances, including dual flush or ultra efficient toilets
  - On-demand hot water systems
  - Radiant heat barrier on roofs
  - Non-petroleum based insulation material
  - HVAC systems of efficient size
  - Low VOC glue, paint, finishes, including in cabinets
  - Non-formaldehyde floors
  - Seals to insulate garage from living space
  - Vents for kitchens, bathrooms, and garage to outside.



*RECOMMENDED - Bio swales should be used to treat stormwater runoff..*



*RECOMMENDED - solar hot water and sun shading which is incorporated into the architecture of the building.*



*RECOMMENDED - Photo voltaic panels should be included on new developments.*



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## GLOSSARY

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**Bioswales** - landscape elements designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water. They consist of a swaled drainage course with gently sloped sides (less than six percent) and filled with vegetation (source: Wikipedia).

**Building Face** - the front facade of a building, usually identified by a front entry or entry features such as a porch, stoop, and front door.

**Bulbout** - a curb extension that reduces the pedestrian crossing distance of a street.

**Corridor Building** - a multi-family residential building that utilizes a corridor for access to individual units.

**Double-loaded Street or Paseo** - a public street or space that has residential units on either side, facing the public street or space.

**Front-loaded Townhouse** - a residential unit (usually 2-3 stories) with garage access provided in the front of the unit, usually from the street or sidewalk.

**Green Point Rated** - a California certification program developed by the non-profit organization Build It Green, developed to meet the growing need of setting a standard to qualify a new home as sustainable / green.

**LEED for Homes** - a rating system that promotes the design and construction of sustainable homes, based on The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) established LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) system to define and measure "green buildings." The LEED for Homes rating system is part of the comprehensive suite of LEED assessment tools to provide national consistency in defining the features of a green home. It enables builders anywhere in the country to obtain a 'green' rating on homes (source: USGBC).

**Rear-loaded Townhouse** - A residential unit (usually 2-3 stories) with garage access provided at the rear of the unit, usually from an alley or parking court.

**Paseo** - an open space that serves as a pedestrian connection between two buildings.

**Podium** - a platform used to raise a building up in order to gain space below for parking.

**Single-loaded Street or Paseo** - a public street or space that has residential units on one side, facing the public street or space.

**Stacked Flat** - a one-story residential unit that is "stacked" on top of or below another residential unit within the same building.

**VOC** - shorthand for "volatile organic compound," chemical compounds that typically produce chronic effects when concentrated in indoor environments. VOCs are commonly found in many building components such as paint.

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**Site sizes and configurations.****OVERVIEW:**

R-3 sites within the city vary in size, configuration, and context. In an effort to address specific issues relating to site planning, the case studies presented here focus on three general categories: 1/4 acre sites; 1/2 acre sites; and larger sites. Each category has both opportunities and challenges based on the site's size and configuration. The majority of the sites in the city fall within the range of 1/4 acre - 1/2 acre in size. Because of the nature of the city's demographics and market project examples, unit sizes range from 1,700 - 2,000 s.f. By creating smaller units, densities on some sites could be increased and some challenges could be more easily met.

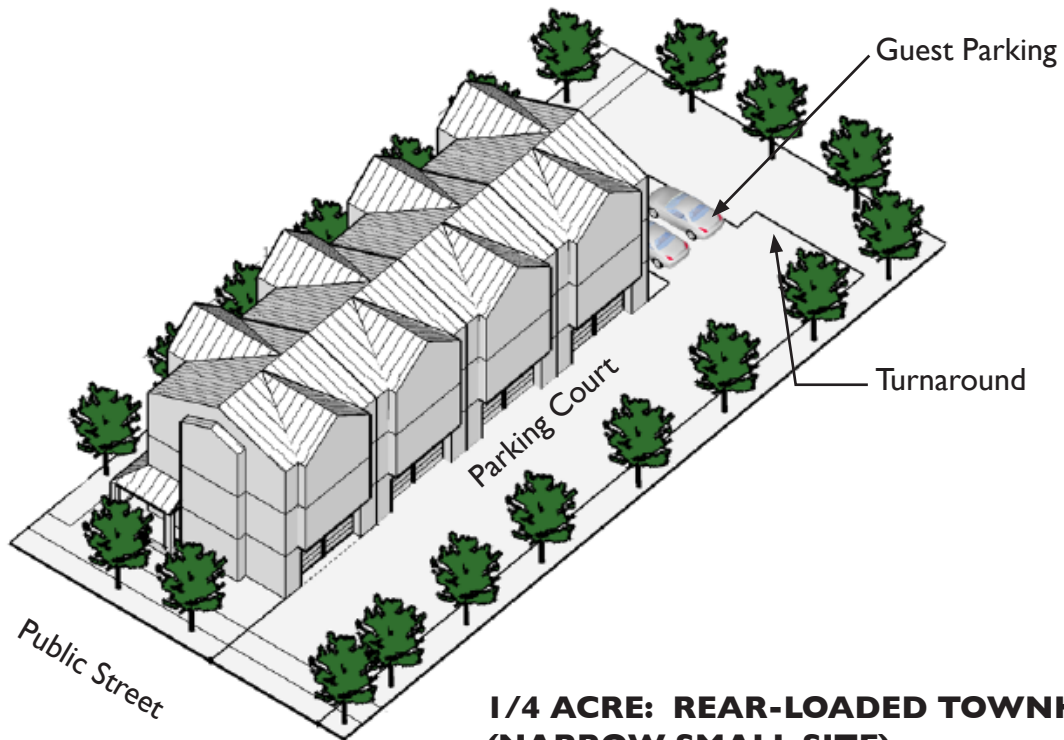
The case studies outlined below are set up to ensure appropriate building types for different sizes and orientations of sites. These studies are intended to be used as an example or aid in developing different sizes of sites, and are not necessarily the only or best solution for each site type or size, however recommended building types for each lot size and configuration are included.



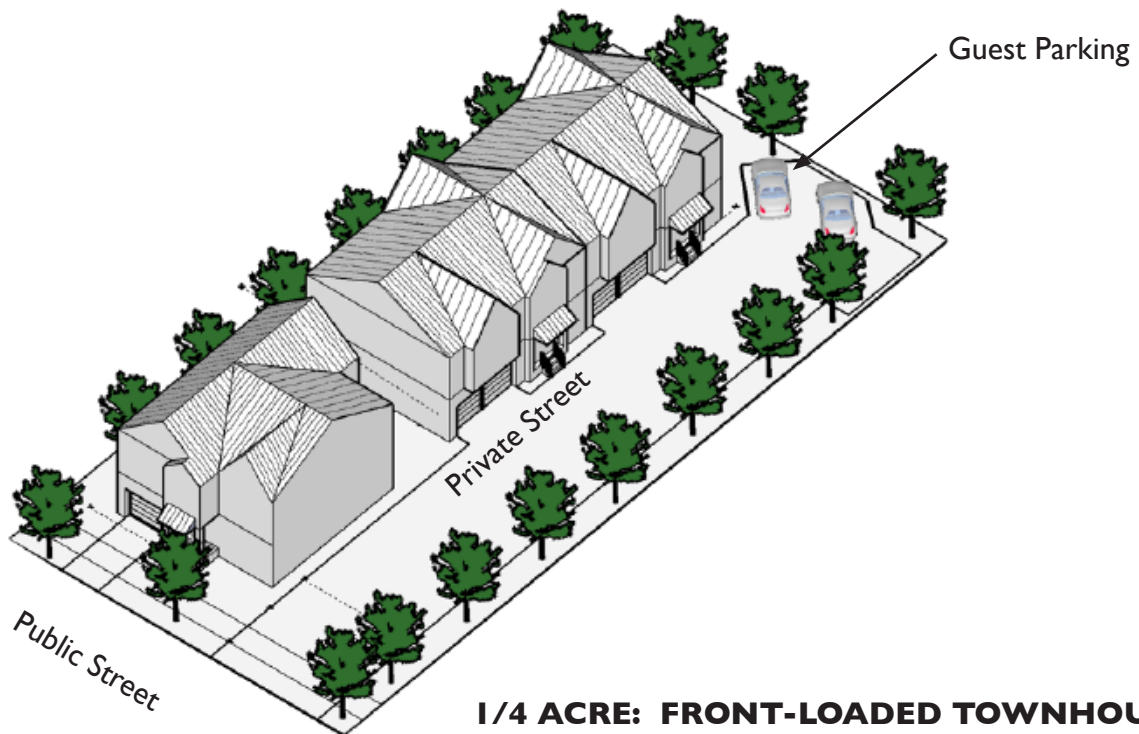
*Existing R-3 sites within the city.*

## 1/4 acre sites

### Site sizes and configurations.



**1/4 ACRE: REAR-LOADED TOWNHOUSE  
(NARROW SMALL SITE)**



**1/4 ACRE: FRONT-LOADED TOWNHOUSE  
(NARROW SMALL SITE)**

*Front- and Rear-loaded townhouses on 1/4 acre lots*

## 1/4 acre sites - 75' x 150':

Small sites of approximately 1/4 acre are typically narrow and long in dimension which limits their possible layouts. It is most typical that a site of this size will have a single entry point from a public street and minimal internal pedestrian amenities.

### Challenges:

- o Difficult to meet side setback requirements and achieve a 6' wide planting strip along drive along adjacent property (residential) development.
- o Difficult to achieve larger unit sizes
- o Difficult to develop podium parking
- o Difficult to develop rear-loaded unit types
- o Difficult to achieve accessible parking space with two-story units
- o Difficult to achieve significant open space

### Opportunities:

- o Site is ideally configured for 3-story front-loaded townhouse product.
- o Fire access along private drive is not necessary for sites 150' deep or less.

### Recommended Building Types

Front-loaded buildings are recommended due to the site constraints of narrower sites. Rear-loaded developments are less desirable due to lack of space for an adequate alley and property line adjacencies. Wider sites (wider than 75') may be suitable for rear-loaded buildings.

Mixing building types on 1/4 acre sites is likely to be infeasible. Where two narrow sites are adjacent, similar building types should be used when facing each other. Shared drives should be utilized where possible.

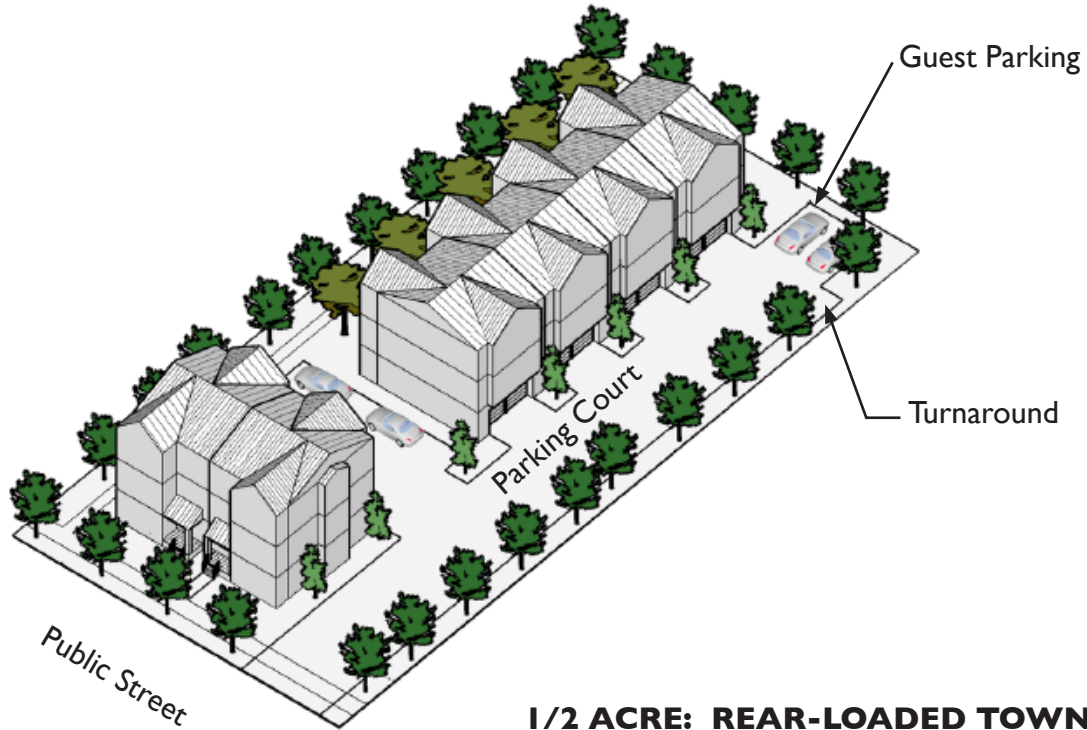


Typical 1/4 acre site orientation

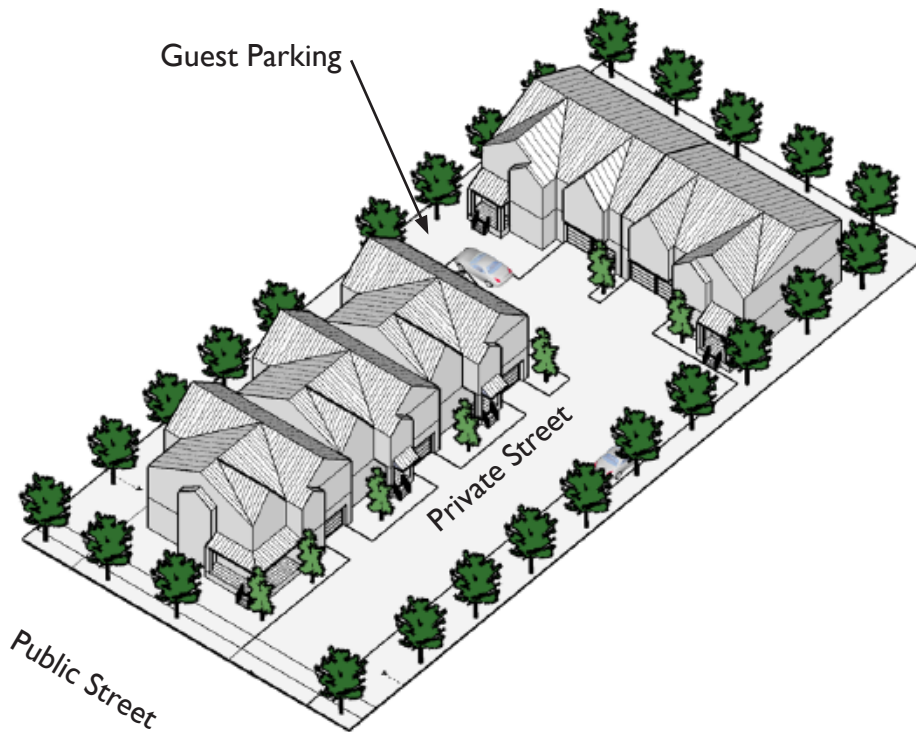


## 1/2 acre sites

### Site sizes and configurations.



**1/2 ACRE: REAR-LOADED TOWNHOUSE**



**1/2 ACRE: FRONT-LOADED TOWNHOUSE**

*Front- and Rear-loaded townhouses on 1/2 acre lots*

## *1/2 acre site - 100' x 200'.*

1/2 acre sites are typically wider than the smaller 1/4 sites, and therefore may offer more flexibility for drives, units facing frontage streets, side setbacks and landscaping.

### Challenges:

- o Podium parking not feasible due to fire access requirements
- o Fire access requires 26' wide clearance along streets and drives for sites deeper than 150'
- o Lack of public open space

### Opportunities

- o Two side by side units can front the public street, creating an attractive face to the development
- o Site configuration allows for a minimum 6' wide planting strip with trees along drive
- o Front or rear-loaded units
- o Side-by-side or tandem parking configurations
- o Unit types can be mixed

### Recommended Building Types

Either front-loaded buildings or rear-loaded buildings are recommended.

Mixing building types on 1/2 acre sites is feasible, however each street or paseo should be designed primarily with one building type. Mixing building types along the same street or paseo is discouraged. Where two narrow sites are adjacent, similar building types should be used when facing each other. Shared drives should be utilized where possible.



## Larger sites

### Site sizes and configurations.



**2.6 ACRE SITE: MIXED UNIT TYPES (ATTACHED)**



**4.0 ACRE SITE: MIXED UNIT TYPES (DETACHED)**

*Mixture of building types can occur on larger sites.*



## larger sites.

Generally, larger sites are more rare in the city but allow much more flexibility in layout and site planning. However each of these larger sites also provides a unique set of challenges.

### Challenges:

- o Connection of site to adjacent blocks and street network
- o Providing fire access to all units

### Opportunities:

- o Creation of a street network and hierarchy of streets, alleys and/or drives
- o Creation of centralized common open space
- o Mixing of unit types
- o Overall site layout flexibility
- o Strong presence along public streets

### Recommended Building Types:

Mixing building types on large sites is recommended, however each street should be designed primarily with one building type on each block, preferably on both sides of the street. Mixing building types along the same street is discouraged. Higher density multi-family buildings types such as podiums with stacked flats or townhouses may be desirable on portions of larger sites.



Typical larger site orientation.